

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HR 642:

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Postsecondary Education and Employment Options
2 for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, young Georgians with intellectual and developmental disabilities finish high
4 school each year to become frustrated "couch kids" with nothing to do and nowhere to go;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, postsecondary educational opportunities have the same benefits for individuals
7 with intellectual and developmental disabilities as they do for traditional students: academic
8 and personal skills building, independence, self-advocacy, friendships, and employment
9 skills; and

10 WHEREAS, inclusive postsecondary programs provide opportunities for students with
11 intellectual and developmental disabilities to further their education beyond high school,
12 which prepares them to blossom in their careers and lives; and

13 WHEREAS, the Georgia Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Consortium seeks to create
14 opportunities for students who have historically not had access to postsecondary educational
15 opportunities; and

16 WHEREAS, there are currently three inclusive postsecondary education programs in
17 Georgia: The Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth (Kennesaw State
18 University); GOALS Program (Columbus State University); and CHOICE Program (East
19 Georgia State College); and two new programs at Georgia Tech and the University of
20 Georgia will begin in the 2015-2016 school year; and

21 WHEREAS, Georgians with disabilities want jobs and careers, but the current system
22 disincentivizes employment; and

23 WHEREAS, as a result, most Georgians with disabilities who want to work are unemployed;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, an "Employment First" policy provides that employment should be the first and
26 preferred option for all people, regardless of their disability, and that employment in the
27 general workforce at or above the minimum wage is the first and preferred option for all
28 working age citizens with disabilities; and

29 WHEREAS, an Employment First policy would benefit Georgians with disabilities, Georgia
30 families, Georgia employers, and Georgia taxpayers; and

31 WHEREAS, the average gain for Georgia taxpayers when a person with intellectual
32 disabilities receives vocational rehabilitation employment services that helps him or her work
33 is \$260 per month; and

34 WHEREAS, an Employment First policy established by the State of Georgia would require
35 the collaboration of all involved state agencies, including the Department of Behavioral
36 Health and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Education, Georgia Vocational
37 Rehabilitation Agency, and the Department of Community Health, in aligning their programs
38 and resources to such end.

39 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

40 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
41 on Postsecondary Education and Employment Options for Individuals with Intellectual
42 and Developmental Disabilities.

43 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
44 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
45 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
46 of the committee.

47 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
48 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
49 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

50 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
51 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
52 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
53 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

54 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
55 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
56 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
57 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
58 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
59 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

60 (6) **Report.**

61 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
62 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
63 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
64 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

65 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
66 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
67 of this paragraph.

68 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
69 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
70 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
71 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

72 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
73 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
74 thereof.

75 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2015.